

REMARKS

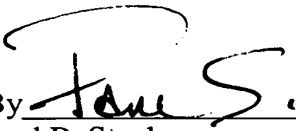
Applicants cancel claims 1-47 and add claims 48-78, such that claims 48-78 are pending in the current application. Although Applicants still believe the canceled claims were distinguishable from the art of record, they have opted to claim the invention in a different manner in hopes of expediting the issuance of allowable claims. In general, the new claims are directed to a bumper for use with a loading dock, that bumper including a first contact surface that is disposed outward from the dock and a second contact surface that is disposed outward from the dock further than the first contact surface. The two contact surfaces are adapted to separately contact an incoming vehicle depending on the vehicle's position relative the dock (e.g., independent claims 48, 56). Another independent claim recites the same first contact surface, but includes a guide member for guiding a vehicle that is off-center relative to the loading dock instead of a second contact surface (claim 67). Finally, a method claim has been included that recites the use of a bumper system, substantially as described above, to prevent a vehicle from parking at a loading dock at an off-center position (claim 78).

Applicants respectfully submit that the newly-added claims define over the art of record (and particularly the Hahn reference (U.S. Patent No. 6,070,283) that formed the bases of the rejections of the canceled claims in the previous office actions) at least because the art of record does not disclose a dock bumper, or bumper system, with a first contacting surface that is disposed outward from the loading dock and a second contact surface that is disposed outward from the loading dock further than the first contact surface. Further, the art of record does not teach a bumper with two surfaces that are contacted separately (not concurrently) with the position of the vehicle determining which surface is contacted. Finally, the art of record does not suggest a surface for contacting an incoming vehicle and a guide member for guiding that vehicle into contact with the contact surface, wherein each contact surface stops the vehicle at a spaced position relative to the loading dock. The foregoing are merely examples of how the

current claims define over the art of record; other reasons will become apparent as the application is analyzed in view of the cited art. Accordingly, Applicants submit that claims 48-97 are in a condition for immediate allowance and respectfully request such allowance.

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Respectfully submitted,

By 

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